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Dependable water source coming soon to Basrah

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Basrah, Iraq—Two million Basrah residents will soon have a more-dependable source of household water for cleaning, cooking, bathing, and washing.

A \$5 million project, scheduled to complete next summer, will connect permanent power to the Sweetwater Canal Pump Station #2. About 70 Iraqis are on the crew installing a new switch gear room, two 5 megavolt amp transformers and two new 1.5 megavolt back-up generators.

“The project is directly impacting Basrah’s economy,” said Iraqi engineer Sattar, who works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “Local Iraqis are on the construction crew earning steady paychecks and most of the construction materials are being purchased from area businesses,” he noted.



An Iraqi crew prepares the rebar for a concrete pad that will support the fuel storage facility at the Sweetwater Canal Pump Station #2. (USACE Photo)



Two Iraqis work on the 33kV cable trench which will help provide permanent power to the Sweetwater Canal Pump Station #2. (USACE Photo by A. Al Bahrani).

Prior to the war, only 12.9 million people in Iraq had access to potable water. Now, nearly 21 million people do, according to Associated Press statistics.

Once complete, the pump station will connect to Iraq’s permanent power grid, lessening its reliance on generators. “So far, 78 kilometers of 33kV transmission lines and 517 steel pole structures have been installed to provide power there,” he said.

Taha Yaseen, who has been the facility administrator there for 11 years, said, “these upgrades to the Sweetwater Canal Pump Station #2 are very critical. Without them, the facility would not meet its capacity. Part of the project includes about 500 meters of chain link fence to make the site more secure.”

The facility contains 16 major electrical pumps and three additional back up diesel pumps with the capacity of 3600 cubic meters per hour

for each one. "Basrah has long relied on this two-decade-old pump station to supply its domestic water needs," Yaseen continued.

"Once the work is finished, the pump station will have a reliable power source for round-the-clock operations immediately benefitting families in more than 25 area neighborhoods," he concluded.

Throughout Iraq the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversaw the completion of 820 water supply projects with another 85 ongoing.



Two Iraqi technicians replace an old valve at one of the intake pipes at Sweetwater Canal Pump Station #2 located 90 kilometers from Basrah. (USACE Photo)

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